

MARCH 2022

# Awfully Comfortable

## Bishop urges parishioners to sacrifice cultural comforts

Bishop Clark Lowenfield, Anglican DWGC

I'm thankful and joyful to be here with you today. I'm also thankful, as a bishop from Texas, that the Texas legislature recently passed legislation that addresses the right to life concerning the issue of abortion. And so, as a representative of Texas, I'm here to say, let's keep going. Let's keep bringing the message of life to our country and to the world.

Now, as I bring God's Word to you today, I am more than aware that I am preaching to the choir. And I need to say this to you this morning. I know us. Whether I've met you or not, or whether we've actually conversed or not, I know us. I know what our hearts are. I know why we're here. I know why the hundreds of thousands of brothers and sisters whom we will join with in just a little while are here. And, in some ways, we're the choir.

And, as I've been thinking about this, I've been praying about what it means to be committed—both to this cause and to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. What does that mean right now for us at this time in our country's history?

Because I must confess to you that, as I was coming here, I felt a certain amount of comfort—comfort in coming to this. I've been to this event many times. In fact, I've been part of this movement since I was the same age as some of you teenagers who are now joining it. And so I know what we're about. I'm comfortable with that. I'm comfortable at how close we are getting, if God so wills, to correct what was done in *Roe v Wade*. I was even comfortable preaching to the choir.

Well, let me say to you—I learned a long time ago that you need to be very wary when you become comfortable. Years ago, I was actually in Charleston, South Carolina. I was leading a church there and had been there for almost 10 years. The church had been destroyed during Hurricane Hugo, and so I'd spent a great deal of time rebuilding it, and my wife and I, with our three beautiful little daughters, had just moved into a beautiful house. Then the Bishop of Texas called me and said, "Clark, it's time for you to come back to Texas." And I said, "Oh, Bishop Benitez, no. We just moved into a beautiful house, and we've just finished rebuilding Holy Communion Church. And, I'm sorry, I just don't think God is calling me back to Texas." There was a long pause on the other end of the phone. And Bishop Ben Benitez, now gone to the Lord, said, "Clark, sounds like you're getting awfully comfortable." And I spent three sleepless nights thinking about it. And then I called him back, and I went back to Texas.

*Continued on page 6*

### Inside this Issue

Feature Story .....	1 & 6-7
Letter from Deacon G .....	2-3
Youth Ministry .....	4

June Term .....	5
Chapter News .....	7 & 12
SUMMIT Reflections .....	8-9 & 11
AFL Board Update.....	10



# Reaching New *Heights* at Life SUMMIT 2022

Deacon Georgette Forney, Anglicans For Life President



## LIFE SUMMIT 2022 BY THE NUMBERS



### 4 COUNTRIES

US, Canada, Ecuador,  
South Sudan



124

Students participated in  
ySUMMIT



120

People transported to  
the March for Life via our  
buses



286

Attendees at Life SUMMIT  
online and in-person

I'm one of those people who tries to imagine every possible thing that can go wrong when I am planning an event. So, planning for the Life SUMMIT 2022 created fertile ground for my imagination to anticipate a variety of potential problems and crises.

Shortly after the new year, while I was praying for the SUMMIT and worrying about speakers canceling, this idea came to me – if a speaker cancels at the last minute, I would do an informal question and answer session to cover the time! I thought that was a solid plan B! Then, as I started worrying about multiple cancellations, I heard this phrase: imagine Me in every moment with you. I jotted it down in my journal and began to invite Jesus into all the places my imagination was taking me, as it related to the five events I was responsible for planning and organizing around the Life SUMMIT and March for Life.

While my head believes that Jesus is always with us, this directive to intentionally include Jesus in every scenario captured my heart, and I had peace as I invited Him into all my anticipated challenges. Given the number of challenges that did come up, this directive reminded me that I could trust that Jesus was in every moment with me, whether things were going according to plan or not.

That was important, because the Tuesday afternoon prior to the week of SUMMIT events brought news that two of our speakers couldn't travel due to COVID, but both speakers were able to record their presentations. Two days later one of our staff members had to cancel her trip with us, and over the weekend our preacher for Friday's worship service canceled due to a death in his family. On Monday of SUMMIT week, Sammie had to cancel as her daughter had COVID, and on Wednesday, another speaker called the office to say she had COVID and was obviously too

sick for me to even ask her to record her presentation.

In addition to the challenges with the Life SUMMIT plans, we had multiple last-minute cancellations from about half of the women who were scheduled to participate in the Silent No More Awareness Campaign. COVID, weather, and sick family members kept the phone ringing with last minute changes.

One more speaker, who was to co-present on adoption canceled Friday evening before Saturday's Life SUMMIT, because his child had a fever, and he was concerned it could be COVID! Graciously, his co-presenter agreed she could do the presentation alone.

While there were clearly multiple times when I could have panicked or freaked out over the ever-changing situation, God's peace kept me calm and at times laughing at how many times we managed to pivot from original plans to God's best plan. I can look back now over those three days and five events and see He was with me and that everything was exactly how He had planned it to be.

One young woman who had previously attended the ySUMMIT as a student returned this year, as a youth leader!

An AFL Chapter Leader relayed this to me:

"I got a report from a mom of a teenager who attended the March and apparently participated in the activities AFL provided. She said everything was outstanding and well done, such high quality! She learned so much and came home energized. I think we had about fifteen adults and kids go from St. Clements in El Paso, Texas. The mom, who is a twenty year Cru missionary, confessed that she had doubts about sending kids on such an expensive trip. But she was convinced that it had all been worthwhile."





Bishop Clark Lowenfield preached a wonderful sermon Friday morning. The theme of his sermon was about the importance of getting out of our comfort zones to stand for life. This mantra was echoed numerous times by our speakers on Saturday.

The Silent No More Awareness Campaign had one couple, two men, and ten women give testimony in front of the Supreme Court, with a special contingency of women from Puerto Rico sharing in Spanish. After warming up back at the hotel, we were able to host a de-briefing, where everyone shared what their experiences meant to them. This sacred time was highlighted as we prayed for one another and those who still need to know the healing and forgiveness that is available through Jesus.

We employed Plan B, and utilized the informal question and answer session at the Life SUMMIT on Saturday. This worked perfectly because questions were raised pertaining to a few speaker's topics.

All in all, as I look back over the last couple of months, I am in awe of God's goodness and faithfulness to Anglicans For Life, the staff, and me. Not only was it helpful to imagine Jesus with me, but as the events unfolded, I had such an awareness that He was with me, leading AFL, and present in all the events. All we could do during the drive home on Sunday was to praise God and give thanks that everything went exactly how He planned!

I hope the articles and pictures in this newsletter give you a glimpse into our awesome SUMMIT events, and that you will plan to join us next year! Save these dates: Thursday, January 19 through Saturday, January 21, 2023.

For His Glory,

*Deacon George*

*Anglicans For Life is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, supported by churches, individuals, & foundations. Your contributions allow AFL to uphold the biblical principles of Life. Please use the enclosed envelope to make a donation! A financial statement is available upon request.*



Scan to follow us on social media.



## Youth Engage Life Issues at Life SUMMIT 2022

Ernie Didot, ACNA Communications Team



"We need to make abortion not only illegal but unthinkable," said Deacon Georgette Forney, President of Anglicans For Life. This was the mantra repeatedly expressed by her and others during the ySUMMIT 2022, a youth-centered event held Thursday evening, January 20, at The Falls Church Anglican in Virginia.

The gathering of Anglican youth from around the United States was an effort to help youth fully understand the worth of all human life, including their own.

"I hadn't thought about trying to make it unthinkable. How do we make abortion unthinkable?" said high schooler, Anna Kate Jones, from St. Helena's Anglican in Beaufort, South Carolina. "It's a good question, and I think we should show love as a first response, but then be there for support at all stages."

The event hosted various speakers, who sought to help young people better understand the history and issues at this moment in the United States. Many attended the March for Life the next day in Washington, D.C.

Melissa Ohden, Director of The Abortion Survivors Network, shared the dramatic story of her survival after being born premature due to an abortion procedure at 31 weeks. Melissa's organization has

connected with at least 325 survivors of abortion—she knows there are many more. "It's crazy," said high school junior Ashton Stacks from St. Helena's Anglican, "How God took someone whose life should have ended from that abortion and is now having such an impact, speaking before Congress and helping other survivors."

Groups like the one from St. Helena's Anglican circled up after the presenters spoke to discuss what they had learned and to ask questions.

Associate Pastor and youth worker from St. Helena's, Zach Miller, commented, "Our society says that we are only useful if we do something, as opposed to just being. But in God's kingdom, regardless of the value in what you can do, God has deemed you worthy to bear His Image, so everyone is of supreme value. This affects how we view all lives, from the unborn to the elderly." AC Gaillard from Beaufort, S.C. grew up in a family that fostered children and believes that fostering and adopting children and helping single mothers who decide not to abort is a way the Church can be a strong witness in showing the value of all lives.

Yoseline Gutierrez from Los Angeles, California came with a group from The Windrose Project and questioned how

young people should respond in states like California, where state leadership actively promotes abortions. The speakers shared practical tips about how the Church can be present and available to mothers before they make a fateful decision, but also how to turn the tide by cultivating a culture of life.

"I am ashamed to say," said Georgette, "that when we first started hosting ySUMMIT, I had erroneously assumed that young people would not want to attend, but I see the young people wanting to engage on these real issues. They want to be people who change the world. We sell them short when we lower our sense in what they can handle. There is a welcome exuberance as they join in the passion and somberness of this cause."





# June Term The Ten Words of Life

Trinity School for Ministry and AFL are hosting a June Term class from June 13-17, 2022. The class will be taught by The Rev. Georgette Forney and The Rev. W. Ross Blackburn, Ph.D. Registration is open from March 30 – May 6, 2022. The class can be taken for credit for \$1,680 or audit for \$350. To register, contact the registrar at [swiliard@tsm.edu](mailto:swiliard@tsm.edu). We interviewed Rev. Blackburn about the class recently.

## Can you tell us about the class?

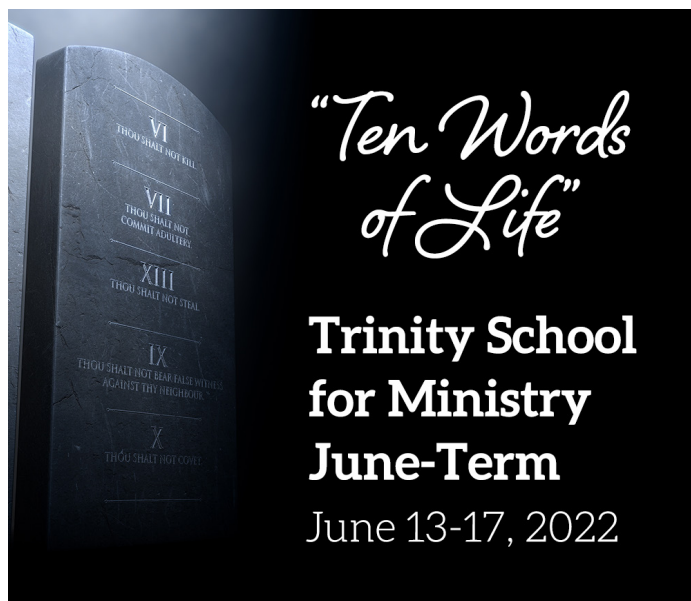
**RB:** This class is about two things – the Ten Commandments and life. “Ten Words of Life” argues that each of the Ten Commandments, without exception, pertains to matters of life, particularly abortion. If that seems far-fetched, it is because we haven’t sufficiently understood the depth of the Ten Commandments, nor have we grasped the breadth of concerns at stake in matters of life. If true, however, then life issues are not “issues,” but matters central to the Gospel and to the Church’s witness. This class will challenge our complacency and expose ways in which we, even those of us who are pro-life, unwittingly participate in what Pope John Paul II has called a culture of death. Abortion and euthanasia are hidden catastrophes, and millions burdened by these sins need to know the freedom and forgiveness offered in Christ Jesus.

## What do you want students to learn by taking this class?

**RB:** Perhaps counter intuitively, looking at the Ten Commandments through the lens of life issues helps us understand the Ten Commandments better on their own terms—as commands given to Israel. Yet we’ll also see how they address many of the intransigent cultural matters today. For example, the Ten Commandments beckon us, as they did Israel, to confront matters such as the nature of marriage and family, the political character of the Church’s witness, the nature of justice and injustice, the character of language, and—most importantly—worship. In the end, we want students to leave the class knowing God better, being more convinced of God’s goodness, and being better able to witness God’s grace to a heavy-laden and abortion-weary world. The Ten Commandments give us real guidance on how to address, with firmness and grace, a human catastrophe that has left millions of victims—children, parents, and the rest of us—in its wake.

## Aren’t abortion and euthanasia cultural issues? Why would a seminary teach about them?

**RB:** Jesus’ call to make disciples of all nations could be well understood as making disciples within all cultures, for the Gospel, always and necessarily, addresses culture. To be blunt, abortion and euthanasia aren’t cultural issues any more than eugenics was a cultural issue in Nazi Germany, communism in the USSR, or the One-Child policy in China. Human suffering can never be reduced to a cultural issue.



## Why do you believe the Church should address life issues?

**RB:** We have no choice but to address life issues. It is a matter of faithfulness. Isaiah’s call remains ever true for the Church—“seek justice, correct oppression, bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow’s cause” (Isaiah 1:17). Not only is defending the vulnerable required by God, but it is who we are, for those who love God love the Image of God. It is also an opportunity. The brightness of the Church’s witness to Christ depends upon her extending herself for the vulnerable. To do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God—this is a Church that can speak to the world.

## Do you have to be ordained to take the class?

**RB:** No. We hope many bishops, priests, and deacons take this course, but the strength of the Church is found in the laity, the people of God. Our hope is that those who take this class will be able to take what they have learned back to their rectors and their churches and use it.

## What are the requirements if you want to take it for credit?

**RB:** If it is the first credit class you have taken at Trinity, you do not have to be formally enrolled. The course requirements are laid out in the syllabus, which can be found at: <https://www.tsm.edu/interterms/>. In short, we will read through four books, a handful of articles, and write four papers. StM or DMin students have more extensive requirements.

## Can you take the class without having to do papers and a lot of extra reading?

**RB:** Yes. You can audit the class in full, or you can take a two-day option.

# Awfully Comfortable (Continued)

Bishop Clark Lowenfield, Anglican DWGC



C.S. Lewis once said, “I didn’t go to religion to make me comfortable or happy. I always knew a bottle of port wine would do that. If you want a religion to make you feel really comfortable, I certainly don’t recommend Christianity.”

In fact, I believe that the Christian life is inherently supposed to be uncomfortable. The Word of God speaks to it. The disciples of Jesus are supposed to deny themselves, as is said in Matthew 16. We’re supposed to take up our cross, as said in Luke 14. We’re supposed to be the subject of persecution, as said in John 15. We’re supposed to be willing to sacrifice cultural comforts of home and even of family, as is said in Luke 9. We’re even to be crucified with Christ, as Paul says in Galatians.

But every part of the culture we live in is designed so that we are comfortable, that our default is to do what makes us happy. And that affects us every day of our lives. We oftentimes find ourselves losing touch with the reality of the discomfort that our Christian faith calls us to, even when we’re participating in godly causes. I found myself flying up here realizing that I had become too comfortable, even in this cause which I have believed in and have supported for so long.

I’ve heard many people ask over the last year, especially because of the legislation that was passed in Texas, what is the pro-life movement going to be like if *Roe v. Wade* is actually appealed? And I’m thankful that Georgette and others have begun to transition us concerning the sanctity of life several years ago, to see that it’s not just about being anti-abortion. But I will say to you that I’m not sure we have fully understood what our message should be if *Roe v. Wade* is actually repealed, and what our purpose is supposed to be.

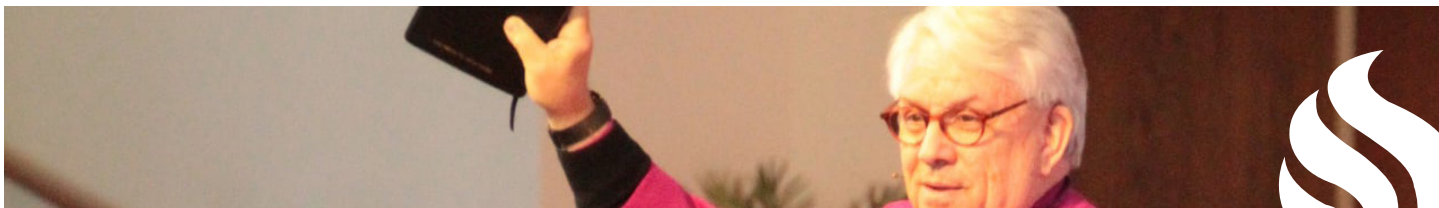
So, how can you and I as followers of Jesus make sure that we aren’t too comfortable to make the transition? If *Roe v. Wade* is repealed, what’s your response going to be? As we march today, that needs to be a prayer in our hearts throughout this day. Lord, show me, if this is going to come to pass in just a few months, what are You going to purpose for me to do in the months and years ahead?

Those of us who have more gray hair will tell you that learning God’s purpose for your life, besides making a commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ, is one of the most important things you’ll ever do. In fact, our generation was very much affected by a book by Pastor Rick Warren called the *Purpose Driven Life*. In that book, Pastor Rick Warren begins with these simple words: It’s not about you. And then it goes on to basically unfold the reality that, if you’re seeking God’s purpose for your life, whether it be in the ongoing commitment to this movement or any other Christian cause, you have to start with the reality that it’s not about you. It’s about God. It’s about His Gospel movement in this world. It’s about His Son, Jesus, and how God and the Holy Spirit are now working amongst us. That’s what it’s about.

When I was first out of seminary, I was assigned to four small mission churches on a 300-mile circuit in West Texas. These small mission churches also had three missional churches down on the border of Mexico. We had taken over three Roman Catholic churches, and we went there to do Vacation Bible School and teach.

Toward the end of my time there, I was visiting all the people that I’d met and taught, learned with, and disciplined over those years. And one of them was a fellow by the name of Rafael, who actually lived down on the border of Mexico with his three children, confined to his wheelchair. His wife had abandoned him years before, and he raised his three children from his wheelchair by himself. Rafael’s only means of sustenance and provision was wood carving. And the day I went to say goodbye to him, he handed me one of the most beautiful crucifixes I had ever seen in my life. And as he handed it to me, I realized that he could sell this and provide for his three kids. These kids oftentimes needed shoes or food, which I would take to them. So I said, “You could sell this, Rafael, and provide for your kids.” And he looked at me with anger, the only time I’d ever seen him look at me that way. And he said, “How dare you, Father, think that you are the only one that might bring the hope and love of Jesus?” Because what he was trying to present me was simply a symbol of his own ministry, his own purpose in





life. And, from that moment, I realized that my life as a priest, and now my life as a Bishop, had to be not simply promoting a message, not simply trying to inspire people, and not even simply bringing the hope and the life of Jesus to others. It had to be helping others do the same.

A number of years ago, I ran across a little tract by Dr. Dallas Willard, a great Christian philosopher, entitled *The Cost of Non-Discipleship*. Dr. Willard describes all of the costs that occur from non-discipleship, such as societal issues or cultural issues like abortion and confusion over marriage. And he said that every single one of these problems can be pointed to as a cost of non-discipleship, that the Christian Church alone, if she disciplined, would never put up with things like abortion or the Supreme Court redefining marriage.

So, as you march today, as you contemplate what a post-*Roe v. Wade* world might be, ask yourself—are you prepared to not necessarily look for the next cause or even the continuation of the cause you think you’ve been part of? Rather, are you prepared to ask God, what do you want me to do in discipling someone else?

Our Psalm this day, Psalm 139, said to us this morning, “O Lord, You have searched me and known me. You know when

I sit down and when I rise up. You discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, You know it all together. You hem me in behind and before. You lay Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is high. I cannot attain to it.”

Let me ask you a question, Christian. Do you believe that? Do you believe that God knows you even better than you know yourself? And if you truly believe that, because it’s God’s Word and you have been taught to believe God’s Word, no matter what purpose the Lord has for you in the months and years ahead, you must teach someone you love that this is God’s Word and that they must believe it, and they must live by it.

*Lord Jesus, as we march today, some of us having done so many times before, some for the first time, I pray that we would have supernatural, spiritual visions of what You want for us as individuals, as youth groups, and as churches, and what Your purpose is for us today and in the months and years ahead, Lord. I pray for supernatural vision and inspiration this day, Lord. And all of God’s people said, Amen.*

## Chapter News

Paulette Ivey, AFL Chapter Leader of Holy Cross Cathedral, Loganville, GA, welcomes new Chapter Member Marty Grimes, as they hosted a ministry fair under the big tent on church grounds that coincided with the Diocese of the South’s annual Synod.

Paulette and her Chapter also hosted a “Friends for Life” meet and greet at the Church on a recent Sunday morning to introduce new parishioners to the ministry. They served brunch and had doorprizes, and Paula gave a brief presentation to encourage more people to join their Chapter.





## Marching for Life... for the Very First Time

Fr. Justin Clemente, New Creation Church



I had the privilege to walk in my very first March for Life. As I walked with three of our bishops, many of our priests and deacons, and scads of our people, my mind wandered to this quote from the Epistle to Diognetus, “They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven...To sum up all in one word – what the soul is in the body, Christians are in the world.” This epistle is, perhaps, the most ancient form of an apology for the Christian faith.

Listen to how it describes Christians: as the soul of the world. As thousands upon thousands of people gathered in our nation’s Capitol to mourn the outcome of the *Roe v. Wade* ruling and to prayerfully call our nation to change, we saw one picture of what it means for Christians to be such a thing. Unequivocally, this was a public demonstration. But the day was peaceful, joy-filled, orderly, and decent. There was no rioting, but there was chanting and singing!

As I reminded our people this past Sunday, so I remind you now: this is not an issue to which the Church can or should turn a blind eye. It is not a “hobbyhorse,” nor is it a Republican vs. Democrat issue. It is a deeply moral issue, and our response to it flows out of our recognition that it is God and not man who gives dignity to human life – every human life.

From the top to the bottom, I am so blessed and proud to belong to a province in the Anglican Communion that so clearly and winsomely states its views on the Sanctity of Life. Consider Archbishop Foley’s statement on abortion:

“This is the greatest moral issue of our time, and we must not keep silent. We must not muzzle our voices’ influence. We must continue to knock on the door of the unrighteous judge and demand change.”

Consider the ACNA Canon & Constitutions, documents which govern our life as a province:

God, and not man, is the creator of human life. The unjustified taking of life is sinful. Therefore, from conception to natural death, all members and Clergy are called to protect and respect the sanctity of every human life.

Lastly, consider the clear words of *To Be a Christian: An Anglican Catechism*:

“Since God declares human life sacred from conception to natural death, I may not take the life of neighbors unjustly, bear them malice in my heart, or harm them by word or deed; rather, I should seek to cause their lives to flourish. (Genesis 9:6; Leviticus 19:16; Deuteronomy 19:4-7)”

“Jesus sought the well-being of all who came to Him: He made the blind see and the deaf hear, caused the lame to walk, cured the sick, fed the hungry, cast out demons, raised the dead, and preached good news to all. (Luke 4:17-21; Matthew 14:13-21, 34-36)”

“Suicide, abortion, genocide, infanticide, and euthanasia are forms of murder. Related sins include abuse, abandonment, recklessness, and hatred or derision.”

“As a witness to the Gospel, I can love God and my neighbor by refraining from selfish anger, insults, and cursing, by defending the helpless and unborn, by rescuing those who damage themselves, and by helping others to prosper. (Matthew 5:38-48; 9:35-38; Luke 23:34; Acts 10:34-42; Ephesians 4:25-32; 5:1-2)”

I rejoice that I was able to take part in the 2022 March for Life, and I pray that next year some of you will join me in our nation’s Capital to be what we are. “As the soul is to the body, so Christians are in the world.”









## Welcome Aboard!

Ed Speare Joins AFL's Board of Directors

Kristen Nagy, AFL Director of Marketing and Communications

Anglicans For Life is excited to welcome Ed Speare as the newest member of the Anglicans For Life Board of Directors. Ed is a cradle Anglican who was baptized and confirmed in the Episcopal Diocese of Montana. He and his wife Suzy worship at All Saints' Church in Woodbridge, VA, where they met in 1988.

He brings with him an array of skills and experiences that have equipped him to help us grow AFL's ministry. He was drafted into the United States Army, where he spent his entire career serving our nation from 1970 to 1997. He was stationed at various bases across the US, as well as internationally. After retiring from the military as a Colonel, Ed began consulting with a civilian firm that contracted with several government agencies through 2001, when he started volunteering full-time.

He held the office of Senior Warden of All Saints' Church Vestry during all three years of his term, and he served a five-year term on the Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic's Standing

Committee – the last two years as Chair of the Finance Committee. He also led the Ordination Discernment Committee and the Rector Search Committee that brought Fr. Scott Bailey to All Saints' Church.

Ed credits Suzy for getting him involved in pro-life ministry, as she works for the local pregnancy resource center. Ed currently leads the All Saints' AFL Chapter.

Ed deems himself a prayerful listener, discerner, and thoughtful contributor. His career in the military taught him to lead by example, and he hopes his volunteer work and dedication can make a positive impact on the Church.

He is looking forward to using his talents, administrative gifts, and experience to aid in AFL's mission and to spread the word of the Lord. He is excited to continue to serve the Lord and the Church as long as he is able to do so.

We are very grateful for Ed's dedication to our ministry, and we are pleased to welcome him to the Board.

## Hats Needed For Children

Hats from the Heart is an outreach effort of the Jurisdiction of the Armed Forces and Chaplaincy that provides babies with new hats, which have been hand-knitted, crocheted, or sewn. We wrote about this effort in a previous Carpe Diem newsletter. Since then our readers have donated the majority of the 400+ hats gifted to children in third world countries. Currently, Hats from the Heart are down to less than two dozen hats. The ministry's goal is to provide a new hat for each baby, a simple but profound way to give dignity to each new little person made in God's image. Contributors are free to choose the pattern, color, yarn, fabric, or size (preemie to toddler). If you would like to contribute hats to Hats from the Heart, please send them to **Canon Julie Crunk, 1292 Heritage Landing Drive, Chattanooga, TN 37405.**





# The Balm for My Soul

Ashley Bonner, Life SUMMIT 2022 Participant

I came back from this year's March for Life and AFL Life SUMMIT feeling hopeful – more hopeful than I have felt in a long time. I don't have to tell you that these last two years have been brutal. Not only have we had to deal with the uncertainty of a persistent virus that has sickened and killed for two years, but we've had more political and community upheaval in those years than I can recollect ever happening – with, perhaps, the exception of 9/11 – in my lifetime. I was not expecting this year's March for Life to be the balm for my soul that it was. To see so many people – young and old, every race, from so many denominations – coming together to proclaim God's Word by affirming the Sanctity of Human Life, was such a joy to my spirit. Looking back on that, as well as the wonderful Life SUMMIT put on by Anglicans For Life, has allowed me to put into perspective the trying events that have happened since the beginning of 2020. I begin to understand why this fight for the Sanctity of Human Life is so crucial to our worship of God.

We live in a time when the prospect of risk has never been so easy to eliminate. Babies come when situations in life are not optimal, and so we kill them before they can give us pain or inconvenience. At a time when our elderly should be enjoying the fruits of their lives fully, a grim diagnosis or years of cognitive decline entice us to remove them from the equation before they (or we) encounter any true suffering beyond our control. Yes, even in our attempts to deal with the pestilence that is COVID, we have been unwilling to admit our own helplessness in the face of illness and have insisted on continuing measures that, while well-meaning, have been mostly fruitless. We are a culture obsessed with the removal of risk—risk of pain, risk of disappointment, risk of love lost. When we believe we have the means to eliminate risk, we take it, often without question.

That risk, however, is exactly the work and the mission God has called us to perform. There is no reward without the seizing of a risky venture. The intensity and uncertainty of childbirth must be experienced before the sweet cries of a newborn life are heard by the thankful mother. Most of our elderly must go through difficult, sometimes excruciating, physical and mental trials before they can meet their Lord



and Savior at the end of their journey. Illness – the result of humanity's sin – must be contended with and fought through before it can be conquered. These experiences encompass the very essence of what God made us for – to be masters and to fill the earth, not by the overreach of our sinful wills, but by the blessed plan of our Creator.

I was blessed to spend last weekend with Christians who have taken on that mission and joined the throng of believers who champion life. This year, I spent time on the steps of the Supreme Court listening to the testimonies of the men and women of Silent No More, which provides healing ministry to abortive mothers and fathers. After hearing their stories and attending the March, I can attest that our pro-life movement has not at all been dampened by the woes of the last two years. It is strong. It is blessed. It is, through the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, changing lives and moving mountains in the souls of the people it touches.

If you are anxious about these times we live in, you do not have to be. God has given us a mission to take on the spirit of this age with a still heart. Be still in your heart and know that the Lord is healing and working to hallow and protect the life He has made – the unborn, the elderly, and all of us in between. Take the risks and chances of this life and give them up to the Lord. He is making them into blessings as we speak!

## Reproductive Loss and Healing

Reproductive loss is more common in the Church than we realize, so please remember AFL offers a liturgy for all to use that relates to miscarriage, abortion, and stillbirth on our website. Visit <https://anglicansforlife.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Liturgy-Sanctity-of-Life-Healing-Service.pdf> to view and download. Because April is Abortion Recovery Awareness Month, AFL also encourages churches to place simple announcements in your bulletin, such as: "If someone you know is hurting from a past abortion, visit [AbortionForgiveness.com](http://AbortionForgiveness.com) to find healing resources in your community or call 412-749-0455."

# "I'm Just Like You" Flashcards Product Update

Jeanne Lee, AFL Chapter Co-Leader at The Falls Church Anglican

A wonderful door opened in January for our Anglicans For Life group at The Falls Church Anglican. We were invited by our Children & Family Ministry to present a Sunday School lesson to elementary-age children on life in the womb.

Our lesson plan was drawn from the lesson "The Baby's Heart Beats Like Mine" by Justice for All ([jfaweb.org](http://jfaweb.org)). Our team of three teachers expanded and adapted this lesson for three classes (grades K/1, 2/3, 4/5) at two services – reaching over 100 children! The lesson was a mixture of Bible study and science. Some highlights included singing a Scripture song, "You Knit Me Together in my Mother's Womb," learning about the incredible growth of preborn human life, watching two short videos of babies in the womb, listening to a four-week fetal heartbeat (recorded on video) and then our own heartbeats (with a stethoscope), and making a bracelet that tells the story of the baby's heart starting to beat at three weeks.

To reinforce this lesson, we prepared an AFL Family Resource Box with beautiful age-appropriate books and other materials for parents to borrow. We included the "I'm Just Like You" flashcards that AFL recently produced!

We are planning an elementary-age field trip this spring to our local pregnancy help center. Sunday School students will bring encouraging notecards and little shower gifts for moms and babies being served by the center. This will give our children an opportunity to put their faith into action and to bless others.

Our hope is that seeds of truth will take root in young minds, so that children growing up in today's culture will be equipped to withstand the assault of relativism and lies that degrade human life. Our value is not based on age, location, or ability, but on the truth that we are each created in the image of God. Anyone interested in using the lesson can reach out to me at [tfcafl@gmail.com](mailto:tfcafl@gmail.com).



Order your flashcards today!

Order our new flashcards to teach the next generation about the miraculous way God has knit them together! These flashcards offer an interactive opportunity for Sunday school teachers and parents to teach children how a baby in the mother's womb is just like them! Scan the QR code to order yours or visit <https://anglicans-for-life.myshopify.com/products/im-just-like-you-flashcards> to order.



## Anglicans For Life joins...

Daniel Townsend in honoring the memory of Zac Sparks.

The Rev. Canon & Mrs. Ronald Mook in honoring the memory of Rebekah Elizabeth Mook.

Susan Delgado-Park in honoring the memory of The Rev. Robert and Jeanne Delgado.

Martha Riola in honoring the memory of The Rt. Rev. Peter Riola.